

May Meeting

We're expecting a top-notch turn-out for the Bird Club's last meeting of the spring season to be held May 16 at 8:00 P.M., Jefferson Memorial. And you'll hear a top-notch bird authority. Dr. Miles D. Pirnie, director of the Kellogg Bird Sanctuary, Battle Creek, Michigan, is to be our guest, speaking on "Adventures with Birds" illustrated with slides and motion pictures in kodachrome. His lecture will treat essentially of the bird life of the W. K. Kellogg Bird Sanctuary and the delta marshes at the south end of Lake Manitoba. Dr. Pirnie conducted waterfowl investigations in Canada at the delta marshes during last August, sponsored by the American Wildlife Institute in cooperation with the University of Wisconsin. He is a Ph.D. of Cornell University, instructed in ornithology at that school from 1923 to 1928, served as staff ornithologist for the Michigan Conservation Department from 1928 to 1931, and since that time has served as director of the W. K. Kellogg Bird Sanctuary, Battle Creek, for Michigan State College. Dr. Pirnie is author of "Michigan Waterfowl Management" published by the Michigan Conservation Department in 1935; and he has been chairman of the Wilson Ornithological Club Wildlife Conservation Committee since 1937. Dr. Rudolf Bennett, our February speaker, highly recommends Dr. Pirnie to you. And your Board of Directors recommends that you pass along the word:

MAY MEETING
TUESDAY EVENING, THE 16TH
JEFFERSON MEMORIAL, 8:00 P.M.
SPEAKER: DR. MILES D. FIRNIE
DIRECTOR KELLOGG BIRD SANCTUARY
BATTLE CREEK, MICHIGAN.
SUBJECT: ADVENTURE WITH BIRDS
ILLUSTRATED WITH MOTION PICTURES

Annual Spring Bird Census

The annual spring bird census of the St. Louis Bird Club is scheduled for Sunday, May 14th. Everyone interested in learning to identify warblers, particularly, and birds in general is invited to MEET AT THE SEASCOUT BASE, CREVE COEUR LAKE AT 7:00 A. M., MAY 14TH FOR THE ST. LOUIS BIRD CLUB'S ANNUAL SPRING BIRD CENSUS. Miss Ernst, Wayne Short, the Hills, and other leaders will be on hand to help you figure out the warblers. Bring along some lunch. We'll stay as long as the birds hold out. See you at the census!

Feline Bird Lovers

This is the open season for discussing and cussing the uncontrolled family cat because, as a matter of natural food selection, it collects a heavy toll on birds, nestling birds especially, which in numbers over the cities of the state run up into countless thousands of birds annually, as it wanders at will, free to visit and absorb its harvest of birds in parks or wherever birds may be found during the night.

It is the open season for useless heated arguments in the People's Column of the daily press for or against the cat, that only serve to widen the breach between cat owner and bird protector.

It is the open season for strained relations between friends and neighbors over the depredations of the cat, while the cat, knowing nothing or caring what it is all about, continues its nightly prowls in search of what it might consider legitimate prey.

The cat as a pet has its appeal and there are, no doubt, members of this organization who yield to the blandishments of a friendly, purring cat, but do owners of cats realize the great loss in bird life they, themselves, are thoughtlessly causing by giving uncontrolled freedom to their family pets at night? Few of them think about it. The cat cannot be blamed, for it is merely obeying the natural impulse of predatory animals. It cannot be taught by scolding, lecturing or punishment to leave birds alone,-- it will go on loving the birds to death if given a chance.

It cannot be blamed if its thoughtless owner puts it out for the night instead of keeping it in, or takes it a long, long way from home and turns it loose to starve or join the army of over 700,000 stray or half-wild cats that infest the woods and destroy not less than twelve million birds in Missouri along every year.

And the cat cannot be blamed if we, whose interest is in bird protection and nature conservation, fail to do our part by trying to acquaint the owners of cats, as well as other persons, with these proven facts and ask their cooperation in conserving bird life. Turning the unwanted cats, kittens or begging cat-tramps over to the Humane Society is far more humane than dumping them alive in the country rather than kill them, for by turning them loose in this manner the cat carrier is actually aiding in the destruction of birds by proxy.

We will probably meet with many rebuffs for our trouble, but what of it? We will hear more "Thank You's" from persons who had not thought of it in this way. Argument is a waste of energy - and gets nowhere. Let's try persuasion and then, if the cat still makes unwelcome overtures to the birds on our property, remember that the cat is an outlaw and has no protection, and does so at owner's risk. It's time then for the cat trap.

The nesting season is April, May and June, not a very long time to keep the cats from running around.

Sterling P. Jones

Conservation News

Nineteen counties in Northwest Missouri which did not receive plantings of Bobwhite quail on game management areas last summer last month received brood stock from the Missouri Conservation Commission. These birds were held at the hatcheries throughout the winter to assure getting them through the winter in good condition for the 1939 nesting season.

All areas planted with quail under the supervision of the Commission's field biologist and the district Wildlife Conservation Agents, have been checked and found to be suitable. Under the Conservation Commission's game management program of improvement of the natural environment for wildlife, there must be an adequate natural supply of food, cover and water on an area before it can be eligible for designation as a game management area.

Birds are being liberated in thick cover near food and water.

With the Springdale Bird Sanctuary at Cape Girardeau attracting marked attention from Audubon Societies throughout the middle-west, the success of the project has caused a county conservation federation to seek the assistance of the Missouri Conservation Commission in establishing a similar area in the Joplin city park on Shoal Creek.

The Springdale Sanctuary, the first to be established under the auspices of the Audubon Society of Missouri, was given to the Cape Girardeau community by

Mr. and Mrs. I. R. Kelso in 1937. Since that time the area has been checked by wildlife technicians and a plan for providing adequate food, cover and water for wildlife put under way. The area is much used by nature study groups. The proposed sanctuary on Shoal Creek would also be available for nature study groups.

Not all predators of wildlife are blood hungry creatures of the wild, and with a new crop of game birds and animals making their appearances, the Conservation Commission urges every Missourian to look to his so-called domestic animals which are allowed to run loose.

That you can't blame a good rabbit or bird dog for hunting when he gets a chance, but that any damage done to wildlife in its rearing season might well be charged to owners of the animals, is the opinion of game experts. Hunting dogs on the loose can do as much damage as free running, semi-wild house cats. They can't be expected to know when the legal hunting seasons end, and they naturally will continue the pursuit for which their masters praise and train them at other times.

It is pointed out by leading dog authorities that a dog worth having is worth keeping properly and should not be permitted to run wild, as loose running dogs are seldom good gun dogs when the owners need control over them.

The last of the chukars to be planted by the Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit for the Missouri Conservation Commission on test areas in seven locations in the state have been distributed. There were 477 birds in the distribution. This terminates the liberation of chukars according to the original research plan as it provides a total liberation at the rate of one bird to seven acres on a total area of 14,620 acres where the studies of the chukar partridge are being continued. The study will be continued without further liberations.

Hunters and trappers who failed to observe the closed seasons on game birds and fur-bearers and other animals made up a large part of the list of persons apprehended by Wildlife Conservation Agents during the first three months of 1939, according to Asbury Roberts, Chief of the Protection Division of the Missouri Conservation Commission.

Thirty-four of the 92 arrests made during March were for disregard of the closed seasons, and were a big item in the 270 arrests made since January 1. There was an increase from 75 to 92 arrests as compared to the same period last year. The high number of convictions continued with 84 convictions; one case pending, and only seven dismissals. Fines totaled \$773; costs, \$830.

Arrests were for : improper license or no license, 39; disregard of closed seasons, 34; disregard of bag or creel limits, 3; improper method of taking fish or game, 5; refusal to permit inspection, 1; serving, selling game or fish, 9; violation of regulation protecting song birds, 1.

Hundreds of Missouri boys and girls will have new fields of activity opened for them this spring and summer as they earn points for good deeds to wildlife for the Missouri Nature Knights awards offered by the Missouri Conservation Commission. Nearly 50,000 pledge cards by means of which the young Missourians enroll in the work, have been distributed through county superintendents of schools, conservation groups and youth organizations.

The program, which includes more than thirty activities in which the youngsters may earn the points necessary for the awards, includes many projects for spring and summer work. Some of these are planting areas with cane, sorgo, and negari to be left standing, establishing a wildlife haven, providing bird houses,

exploring a brook for half a mile and writing notes on observations, making farm wildlife food, cover and water survey, starting wildlife library and museum.

Before the close of the current school year nearly all of the counties in Missouri will have some schools with pupils participating in the program. More than 80 counties already have groups enrolled.

Awards are made in April and November of each year.

Fireside Chat by the President (Bird Club)

Give the Chimney Swifts a break. Should a pair of them be noted flitting about near your chimney, hesitate before starting that grate fire on a chilly day in May. The flue might be their bird home.

Swan Song

This is your farewell bulletin for this spring. According to our constitution the May meeting is our final one until October. Your next bulletin will arrive then. Until October - May all your birding dreams become realities!

April Meeting

A Nice turn-out of Conservationists was rewarded at our April meeting by a splendid resume of the state of national natural resources by Mr. I. T. Quinn, director of public relations of the National Wildlife Federation. The St. Louis Bird Club is particularly grateful to the federation for sending us Mr. Quinn and is appreciative to the St. Louis Post-Dispatch for a 1000 word abstract of his talk which was published on the editorial page of the Post-Dispatch, April 24. We suggest you check that edition for a resume.

Bird Walk Resume

The Bird Walks were a success this April in spite of poor weather. Totals for the month: Attendance 375; birds, 73 species; best birds found - double-crested cormorant, pied-billed grebe, American bittern, solitary sandpiper, lesser yellow-legs, least sandpiper, Bewick's wren, Savannah and vesper sparrows. Seventy-three species within any city's borders is good seeing. Thank you, leaders!

Results

Word comes from Gillespie, Illinois that our Bird Walk which was attended by 30 Gillespie High School students April 16 so impressed them that demands have been made of Miss Lillian Wilson, teacher, that a Gillespie Bird Club be formed. We're happy to have been the instigators!

April Region Resume

The banner observation of the month occurred at Horseshoe Lake April 8 when Miss Ernst, Wayne Short, and Bill Jenner (Fayette) had four species of grebe on one body of water. Besides the common pied-billed grebe, there were two handsome horned grebes, one in brilliant breeding plumage, the other in winter dress. But a still rarer species was a tiny grebe diving animatedly. And to climax the day, two giant hoelbell's grebes, strange visitors from western shores, graced the lake, sleek and slender necked, rare as their beauty.

A good cormorant day was April 21. At Horseshoe there was one flock of 306 individuals, another near-by of 97, and a third a short distance away of 33.

An early Florida Gallinule date - April 23, Horseshoe.

American Golden Plover dotted the Missouri country-side. As many as 200 were observed in one day; the last date - April 15th.

April 23rd brought 10 Forster's Terns to Horseshoe; 10 black terns were featured April 28th.

Birds of the Month

Due to Arrive in June: None

Due to Leave in Early June: Double-crested Cormorant
Pectoral Sandpiper
White-rumped Sandpiper
Least Sandpiper
Semi-palmated Sandpiper
Caspian Tern
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher
Least Flycatcher
Gray-cheeked Thrush
Bay-breasted Warbler

(Please check your other spring bulletins for lists of arrivals and departures. All birds listed in other bulletins as "arrivals" and not listed under "departures" will remain for the summer.)